



National Child Care Information Center

A service of the Child Care Bureau

NCCIC

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STATE EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE CHANGES: RECENT INITIATIVES

The following is a sample of State initiatives to integrate education and care services in an existing or new department/office.

Florida

■ **Office of Early Learning**

Agency for Workforce Development

107 East Madison Street

Caldwell Building, MSC 140

Tallahassee, Florida 32399-4120

850-921-3180

World Wide Web: <http://www.floridajobs.org/earlylearning/index.html>

The Early Learning Act enacted January 2005 by the Florida Legislature revised the governance structure of the school readiness system by abolishing the Florida Partnership for School Readiness and directing the Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) to govern State-level policy and provide Statewide coordination of school readiness programs. The Act also established the Office of Early Learning (OEL) within AWI to administer the early learning system and the Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program.

The OEL serves as the principal organization responsible for enhancement of school readiness. The OEL has duties which include providing final approval and an annual review of coalitions and plans; safeguarding the effective use of Federal, State, local, and private resources to achieve the highest possible level of school readiness for the State's children; adopting a system for measuring school readiness that provides objective data regarding the expectations for school readiness and can be used to assist in determining program effectiveness; developing and adopting performance standards and outcome measures; and preparing a plan for measuring school readiness which includes a uniform screening that will provide objective data regarding expectations for school readiness.

The text of Early Learning Act is available on the Web at

http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=Ch0411/PART01.HTM.

Georgia

■ **Bright from the Start**

Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning

(formerly Office of School Readiness)

World Wide Web: <http://www.dec.state.ga.us/>

The Bright from the Start: Georgia Department of Early Care and Learning was created when the Georgia General Assembly passed Senate Bill 456 during the 2004 session. The Department will continue to administer Georgia's Pre-K Program while creating a comprehensive early care and education system. Bright from the Start is responsible for overseeing child care and educational services for Georgia's children ages birth through four and their families and for administering the nutrition program for children and adults. Bright from the Start's responsibilities include administering Georgia's Pre-K Program and implementing the Standards of Care Program to enhance the quality of child care provided to infants, toddlers, and 3-year-olds. Since 1992, the Georgia Lottery for Education has been used to support the development of a preschool program and a college scholarship initiative.

The text of the legislative Bill is available on the Web at
http://www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/2003_04/fulltext/sb456.htm.

Maryland

■ **The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE)**

200 West Baltimore Street
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-767-0348

World Wide Web: <http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/instruction/>

During the 2005 session, the legislature passed HB 932 and SB 759. Included language to create a division of Early Childhood Development within the State Department of Education and to transfer the Child Care Administration (CCA) and certain programs and funding to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE).

The Child Care Administration in its entirety, with the exception of the Purchase of Care Program, will be transferred to the State Department of Education effective July 1, 2005. The Department of Human Resources will continue to administer the Purchase of Care program through the local departments of social services.

The full text of the bills is available on the Legislature Web site at
<http://mlis.state.md.us/2005rs/billfile/HB0932.htm> (fiscal note:
http://mlis.state.md.us/2005rs/fnotes/bil_0002/hb0932.pdf; Bill Text:
<http://mlis.state.md.us/2005rs/bills/hb/hb0932e.pdf>).

MSDE has established a number of early childhood initiatives which promote best practices in early pedagogy and support the school reform efforts in Maryland, including content standards for prekindergarten and kindergarten. For additional information contact MSDE at 410-767-0348
<http://www.marylandpublicschools.org/MSDE/divisions/instruction/>.

Massachusetts

■ **Department of Early Education and Care**

350 Main Street
Malden, MA 02148-5023
781-338-6364
World Wide Web: <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/>

Effective July 1, 2005, the new Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) combines the functions of the Office of Child Care Services (OCCS) with those of the Early Learning Services Division at the Department of Education. EEC is supervised and guided by a new independent board, the Board of Early Education and Care, which appointed Ann Reale as EEC's first Commissioner. Additional information is available in the press release by EEC, which can be found on the Web at <http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs/EECPressRelease20050701.pdf>.

Tennessee

■ **Office of Early Learning**

Tennessee Department of Education
Andrew Jackson Tower, 6th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243
615-741-3721

World Wide Web: <http://www.state.tn.us/education/>

The "Voluntary Pre-K for Tennessee Act of 2005" directs existing pilot pre-kindergarten programs to be expanded on a voluntary basis, mandates the creation of a pre-k advisory council for educational agencies which apply for such programs, and establishes an Office of Early Education to evaluate pre-k programs. The Office of Early Education was created in July 2005 and will coordinate the Prekindergarten program, Even Start, Head Start, and childcare monitoring. The Act was enacted as Public Chapter 0312 (Effective 06/06/2005) and the text is available on the Web at <http://tennessee.gov/sos/acts/104/pub/pc0312.pdf>. Additional information is also available in a press release by the Tennessee Department of Education, which can be found on the Web at <http://tennessee.gov/education/news/nr/2005/nr050701.php>.

The National Child Care Information Center does not endorse any organization, publication, or resource.

Updated September 2005